time till it is gradually phased out, after its Total Technical Life is fully exploited.

The Air Force has already re-examined the safety and strike capability of the MIG force in consultation with the Original Equipment Manufacturers and Hindustan Aeronautics Limited. A total of 125 MIG-21 Bis aircraft have been planned to be upgraded. The indigenised production of MIG-21 Bis aircraft continued till 1989. Taking average life of 35 years, the majority of these aircraft have got considerable residual life left. All technical problems as experienced during the exploitation of this fleet have been addressed. MIG-21 Bis Upgraded thus would be a contemporary fighter comparable with the best in its class. The other Air Forces of the world have also been flying aircraft of similar vintage.

Proposal for non-lapsable defence fund

5126. SHRI K.B. KRISHNA MURTHY:
SHRI K. RAMA MOHANA RAO:
SHRI P. PRABHAKAR REDDY:

Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Ministry has sent a proposal to the Finance Ministry for a two year non-lapsing defence fund; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) and (b) A proposal has been forwarded to Ministry of Finance to evolve a mechanism to allow carry forward of unused amount of one financial year, under the Capital outlay, to the next financial year.

AN-32 Aircraft hit by Pak Fire

5127. SHRI C. RAMACHANDRAIAH:
SHRI RAMA MUNI REDDY SIRIGIREDDY:
SHRI NARENDRA MOHAN:
SHRI VIJAY J. DARDA:

Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that an Air Force AN-32 transport aircraft was hit when Pakistani forces opened fire in Kargil sector in the last week of February, 2002;